



COMMANDER, UNITED STATES FLEET FORCES

SERIAL 007 – Fleet Operations



I. Estimate of the Situation

We are, and must remain, a Fleet-centric Navy. Fleet operations are our primary purpose for being and operational readiness is our product. The Fleet is ready today - our response to Haiti while continuing all the other missions required around the globe is the hallmark of a ready force. But some of our key readiness trends are in the wrong direction. If these trends are not turned around with a determined and steady process, we put at risk our ability to retain high-quality Sailors and sustain today's high operational tempo into the future. In my view, operational readiness begins and ends with our ability to retain high-quality Sailors.

I spent the first six months of my tour listening, looking, and learning about the conditions of our Fleet, the morale and capabilities of our people and the operational demands on our force. I then focused the next six months of my tour primarily getting a clear sight picture of the root causes behind negative readiness trends and working with you to formulate action plans to address these systemic issues and not just individual problems. My Guidance reflects what I have learned and my Serials direct the actions we must take to adjust Fleet operations and behaviors in order to deliver forces ready for tasking today and sustain today's Fleet into the future.

The planning phase is complete. IT IS NOW TIME TO EXECUTE. It is time to arrest negative readiness trends; redistribute manpower to correct manning problems (within allocated resources), reestablish a "virtuous" training cycle for our Sailors; hold the line on time-tested, combat-proven standards; and sustain our efforts over time to ensure we retain the high-quality Sailors we need to remain operationally ready and to get our ships, aircraft, submarines, weapon systems, and equipment to expected service life.

II Guidance

1. Train your sights down the chain-of-command and keep them on the forces you command. Focus your subordinate commanders on the absolute necessity of operating and maintaining their units to our established standards so that they achieve mission success. Fleet operations **MUST** be your primary focus, operational readiness your top issue everyday, and disciplined execution your means to that end.
2. When a problem occurs, determine the facts and focus your efforts on understanding and dealing with root causes. In many cases we will find that we did not set up a unit for success. In some cases we will find a unit did not effectively use the authorities and resources provided to properly accomplish the mission. In all cases we will prevent recurrence by adjusting policy, by redirecting resources, or by holding responsible commanders accountable for their actions.


III. Summary

"Pull the string and it will follow wherever you wish. Push it and it will go nowhere at all."

(Dwight D. Eisenhower)

I have great confidence in you and in the Sailors and Navy civilians we are honored and privileged to lead. Together we can - and will - do great things for our Navy, no matter what challenges may come our way.

*Remember, we will be
driven by our choices, not
simply by our circumstances.*


J.C. Harvey, Jr.
Admiral, U.S. Navy